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ART NEEDLEWORK

THE ART OF EMBROIDERY.

X.



O style of embroidery is more purely decorative than the laid, or couched, work described in the previous chapter. The economy resulting from the whole of the silk or metal appearing on the surface is also decidedly in its favor. It must be practised, however, not as a cheap way of doing work which should be artistic, if anything, but only when suited to the purpose it is intended to fulfil. And certainly greater nicety is required of it than of other modes, where faults can be rectified by after-stitches. Here all the lines from the first must be absolutely accurate and true.

Among ancient forms of couched embroidery may be mentioned the grounding stitches of the gold work in the well-known Sion cope—which may fairly be called the standard specimen of English decorative needlework—to be seen in the South Kensington Museum. To the inexperienced eye they appear to be various forms of cushion stitch, but when closely examined they prove a sort of laid embroidery. Looking at the back of this wonderful piece of work, we find it wholly covered with lines of coarse linen thread, which has passed through the ground only to catch the gold thread seen on the front and draw it partially through, the linen thread being wholly out of sight on the front of the work; and yet the precious metal thread is in no sense wasted, since it is all visible, being, in fact, "laid" on the surface. These forms of laid embroidery are peculiarly applicable for use on leather. Some of the beautiful old covers for sofas or chairs are worked with colored silks or metal threads on calf, and there is no reason whatever why this very charming style of embroidery should not be revived in the present day. It has hitherto only been applied to small things, such as letter-cases, but for book covering and many other purposes it might be advantageously used. The difficulty in ordinary embroidering on leather is that every insertion of the needle leaves a permanent mark on the material, and therefore, unless the work is done by a very experienced hand which never makes a mistake, the marks of needle pricks where false entries have been made will destroy the beauty of the work. If laid embroidery is used, all danger of this kind is avoided.

The silk used for couched work must be untwisted or pure embroidery silk. Filoselle is quite inapplicable as a rule, being apt to wear fluffy. Crewel can be used if desired, and some have used filoselle in cases where there

is not much wear, but it is not to be recommended. Laid embroidery is frequently used with very great success for repairing old pieces of needlework. In place of transferring the design on to a new ground, which is the usual method of restoring when the ma-

terial is too much worn to admit of mending, the work may be very carefully stretched and stitched down on to a backing of linen. The whole ground may then be worked in with laid embroidery; and as much of the ancient work was executed on a ground of this descrip-

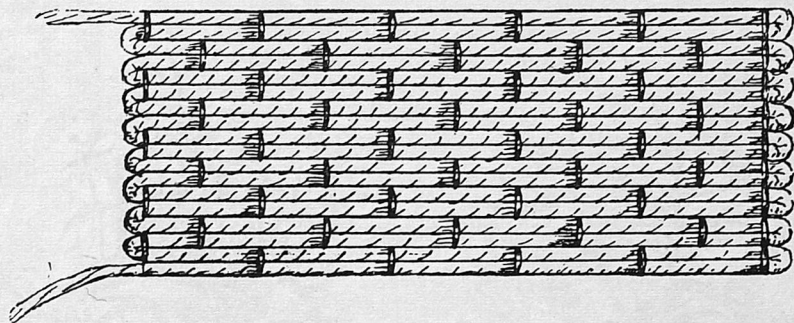


FIG. 32. BRICK STITCH.

tion, it is generally found to be quite suitable for the purpose in question.

The difference between laid embroidery, generally executed in soft, untwisted silk, and the form of couching which is used for gold work lies in the fact that, while

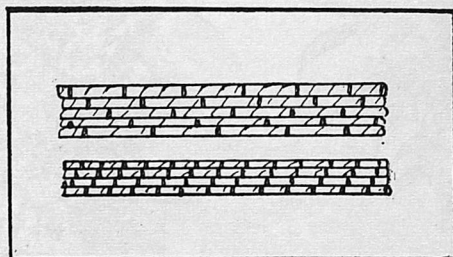


FIG. 33. PLAIN GOLD COUCHING.

in the former there may be said to be two layers of silk, the second crossing the first at right angles, with regular intervals between the threads, the latter has only one layer or "couche," and the threads are fastened down by small crossing stitches, which may be made almost in-

of what is known as diapering is secured. There has been much discussion as to the origin of the word diaper. Some writers have derived it from the name of the town of Ypres, where what we know as diaper patterns were once much used. It appears, however, that this kind of decoration was known and practised long before the manufactures of Ypres became celebrated, which throws some doubt on this derivation, though the manufacturers of Ypres may have adopted and extended the ideas of more ancient designers, and given the name of their town to the improved fabrics. Be this as it may, what is now known as a diaper pattern is one which equally covers the whole ground generally with lozenge or other symmetrical interlacing forms, or with small dots arranged in a certain set order. Originally "diaper" appears to have been a silken fabric—what Dr. Rock describes as "a one-colored yet patterned silk"—and for a long period the material so

designated was always silken. At the present day, as denoting a material, the term is exclusively applied to a linen fabric; but as describing a particular class of design, the name is used indiscriminately for wall papers, woven fabrics or embroidery.

Diaper couching is chiefly employed in church embroidery. Formerly gold passing was used, but its place has been taken by Japanese and Chinese gold thread, which, if carefully used and not allowed to become untwisted, is perfectly suitable for laid work, its only disadvantage being that it cannot be drawn through the material, as passing can.

Gold embroidery, when intended to be placed on velvet, must in all cases be first worked on a firmly woven linen. In some cases it may be worked on silk or satin, but it is almost always necessary to back the material first (this process has been already described), to allow for the weight of the solid mass of gold, which is apt to drag the fabric when out of the frame, and make it hang badly. The stitches are, however, the same in any case, and the transferring will be described later under the head of appliqué or cut work, as it is sometimes called. The sewing down of gold outlines has been already referred to under the head of plain couching. The stitches fastening the gold threads, which are often placed double,

must be taken sufficiently near to each other to prevent any looseness or bulging of the gold. Much of the ancient gold work, and also of the modern as applied to drapery in small figures, is formed simply of rows of gold thread laid very closely side by side, and stitched down with colored silk, the fastening stitches being for the most part taken very close to each other, so as to impart a tinge of color to the gold. In the working of drapery for small figures, the shadows or folds of the

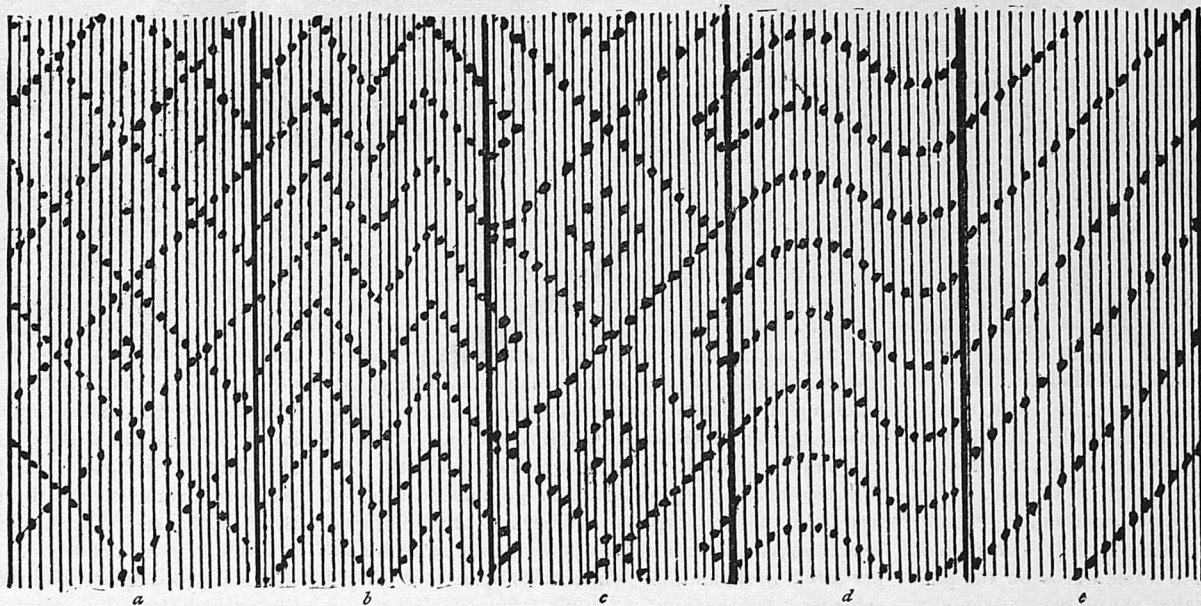


FIG. 34. VARIOUS DESIGNS FOR GOLD DIAPERING.

visible by using fine Maltese silk exactly the color of the gold.

It is more usual, however, in gold couching, to have the fastening stitches of some bright color—red, blue or green—and by their use in a regular pattern, the beauty

dress are frequently given simply by working the silk fastening stitches so closely as barely to allow the gold thread to show through, while in the lighter portions a considerable distance is left between the silk stitches. Fig. 33 is an example of this close gold couching; but for

a beginner it is probably easier to learn brick stitch, the simplest of all gold stitches.

In this the gold threads are laid down two at a time side by side. The fastening stitches, which, as in plain couching, must be taken exactly at right angles with the line they cross, must be placed at carefully measured equal distances, say, for example, half an inch apart. In beginning the work the two gold threads must be pushed through the ground with a gold pricker, or small stiletto, sold on purpose, and firmly secured. The fastening stitches, which we will suppose to be of red silk, are then to be taken over the two gold threads, half an inch apart, until the end of the row is reached. The gold may here be turned sharply round, care being taken to keep the two threads

perfectly flat, and not allow any ugly ridge or lump at the end. In returning, the two threads are laid quite closely beside those of the first row and the fastening stitches are taken also at the distance of a measured half inch, but exactly midway between the stitches of the first row. The gold threads are turned again at the end from which the work was begun, and in the third row the stitches are taken in exact line with those of the first row. This gives the effect, when the work is finished, of brick work, whence its name. The greatest accuracy is required both as to the distances between the fastening stitches and the keeping these in line, which, of course, depends on the distances being exactly measured. Before beginning a piece of brick stitch, a series of parallel lines must be drawn on the linen as guides for the fastening stitches; it is obvious, of course, that if the stitches are to be half an inch apart, the lines marked

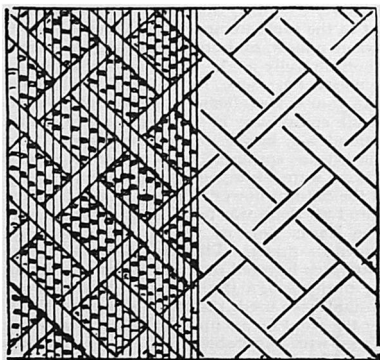


FIG. 35. ALTERNATE GOLD EMBROIDERY.

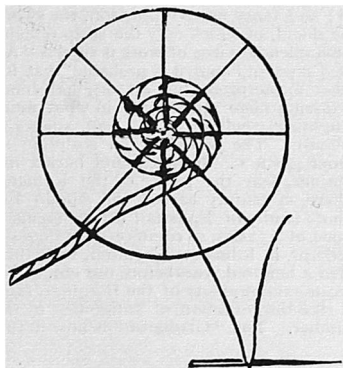


FIG. 37. GOLD BUTTON.

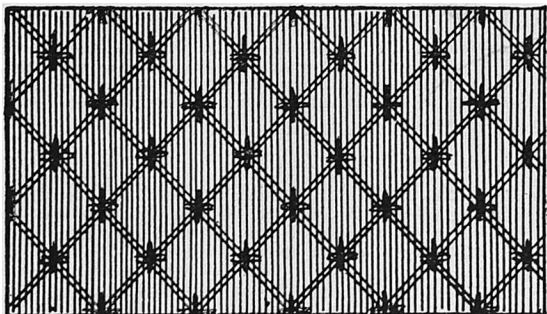


FIG. 38. GOLD AND SILK EMBROIDERY.

on the ground must be only a quarter of an inch apart to give the line for the intermediate fastenings.

Brick stitch may be varied in many ways. The fastening stitches, for instance, may be taken over three or four threads of gold; but when this latter is advisable, it is better to lay down the first double row of gold as described above, and, in returning, to place the stitches on a line with the first instead of between them, so as to cover the four gold threads in place of only two. The next two rows would be fastened exactly between the two previous couplings. The reason for working it in this

way is that it would be impossible to fasten four threads of gold at one time so as to make them lie evenly and be perfectly secure. The illustration of brick stitch (Fig. 32) shows the fastening stitches which are supposed to be of silk twist, and of some color contrasting strongly with the gold, taken at regular measured intervals alternately over two threads of the gold. This stitch may be used effectively either in large masses or small. It is a great favorite in church needlework, and is especially suitable for monograms or for symbolical designs.

After learning brick stitch, it would be well to practise the plain couching of single threads of gold with the small stitches first referred to in this chapter, as all the diaper patterns in gold embroidery result from the different positions of the fastening stitches in some set design, and they are generally taken over single threads of gold. Fig. 34 (a) shows what is known as net patterned diaper; the diamonds formed by the intersecting diagonal lines must all be marked out on the linen ground with the greatest accuracy. The first gold thread must then be laid down, beginning at the right-hand side of the pattern, and the fastening stitches must be taken exactly on the lines marked on the linen. Thin twisted silk is generally employed for this purpose, but ordinary embroidery silk or filo-floss may also be used. When the gold is all sewn down in this diamond-shaped pattern, a small dot or star or cross may be worked in the centre of each diamond, or the centre stitches may be marked on the ground and put in with the others. The next design (b) shows the fastening stitches taken in a mere zigzag fashion. In this case lines must also be drawn on the linen as a guide for the stitches, either in the form of the pattern itself, or in horizontal and vertical lines intersecting each other, if that be sufficient. In each case the greatest accuracy must be observed in marking the pattern on the linen in the first instance, and afterward in following the lines so marked with the stitches.

The next pattern shows a much larger diamond, with a small diamond in the centre. It is to be worked exactly in the same manner as those already described, with the pattern carefully marked out first on the linen. If desired, a variety may be made by working the outside and inside diamonds with different colors or thicknesses of silk. The fourth pattern (d) shows a waved line, which is best measured also by lines marked at right angles on the linen. The fifth (e) shows simple diagonal lines, all in the same direction, about which there is no difficulty, either in designing or in keeping to the pattern with the stitches. Lines drawn with pencil on the linen are generally sufficient, but they must be quite distinct, and any irregularity in following the lines will completely spoil the appearance of the work.

Many beautiful varieties of gold work are made by the alternate use of small close stitches and uncovered spaces. An example of this is seen in Fig. 35, which shows one of the most popular of the old gold stitches. In this case the diaper may be first marked out with the spaced stitches, as in the varieties just described, and afterward the central spaces filled in with the close single stitches, or the filling stitches may be taken as each thread is laid down. Fig. 36 shows the same treatment for the simple diagonal lines. It is obvious that any of the diaper patterns may be worked out in this manner, and, in fact, there is hardly any limit to the varieties which a skilful worker may invent for herself by changing the direction or the positions of the fastening stitches. Only the simplest and easiest of these

are here illustrated, but very elaborate patterns are frequently worked out in this way. The Greek key-pattern, interlacing waved lines and many other designs will suggest themselves to the clever worker. Most of these flat gold patterns may be worked also in thick twisted silk, and silk of this kind is frequently treated as gold in small pieces of drapery, and the like.

Numberless varieties of patterns may be made from adaptations of Fig. 37. This stitch is by no means easy for a beginner, but will afford no particular difficulty to a worker already experienced in the simpler forms of gold

work. The circle is easily enough marked with a compass on the linen, with the rays from the centre to the edge at equal distances. The end of the gold thread must be pushed through in the centre of the design and secured firmly with several close stitches. The thread is then carefully carried round and round the centre until the edge is reached, and the fastening stitches are taken on the radiating lines, which may be drawn either straight, like the spokes of a wheel, or singly or doubly curved. Thick couched double lines of gold may be used in connecting the circles to form a design. Varieties may also be made in these gold buttons or circles by filling up the alternate spaces between the spokes with the small close stitches.

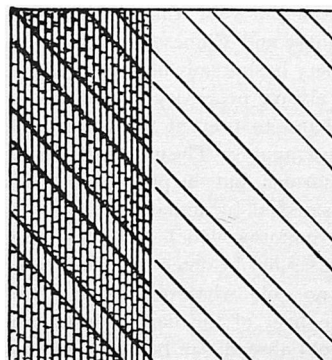


FIG. 36. ALTERNATE GOLD EMBROIDERY.

and one extremely common in old ecclesiastical work, is formed by first laying a "couche" of soft untwisted silk, the threads being placed very closely together, in straight lines from edge to edge of the design. Gold threads, either singly or by twos, are laid at measured intervals diagonally, crossing each other as in net patterned diaper. These gold threads are secured by stitches of silk, which cross them at the point of intersection, either in the form of a simple tent, a cross or double ornamented cross stitch, as shown in Fig. 38. Another pattern of net diapering is made by crossing diagonal lines of gold thread, the alternate diamonds formed by the intersection of the threads being filled in with plain silk stitches taken from point to point in the centre, and gradually shortening to follow the diamond shape within the gold outlines (Fig. 39).

A pretty border is made with two waved lines of gold

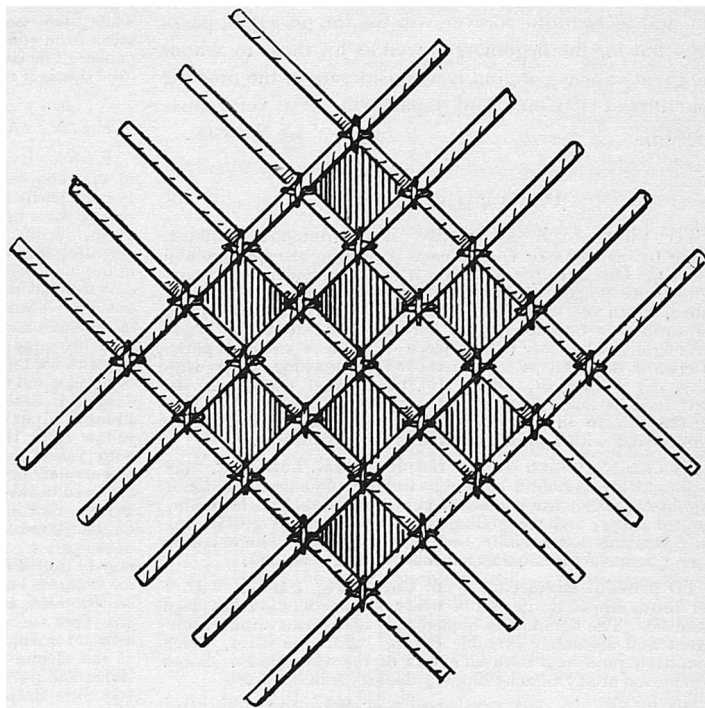


FIG. 39. GOLD AND SILK EMBROIDERY.

thread stitched down with Maltese silk; the space between the waved line and the straight edge, which is formed by two parallel lines of gold, laid down as borders, is filled with satin stitch of soft silk. Diamond-patterned edging may of course be made in the same manner by filling in the spaces at the sides with colored silk. Some of these stitches require to be worked on silk or satin, as they cannot well be transferred; but the intelligence of the embroidress must be left to decide this question, as it is impossible to give full directions for the treatment of every stitch separately. For all gold work

it is necessary to have a sharp stiletto with which the gold thread may be pushed through the ground at the beginning of the work. The end needs to be very firmly secured with several close stitches, or it is apt to slip afterward and spoil the work. A pair of surgeon's tweezers are also almost a necessity. They serve to turn the gold at the ends of the rows and to hold it in its place, while the right hand is employed in stitching it down. Many ladies also prefer the fine bent scissors which surgeons use to any others, and they are no doubt extremely convenient, besides being of better steel than any mere embroidery scissors.

The difference between the gold thread known as "passing" and the Japanese and Chinese gold so much used in modern embroidery has already been pointed out. In using the latter it is always necessary to keep giving it a twist with the left hand to prevent the paper with which it is made from unwrapping. The gold itself, being perfectly pure, does not tarnish, but the purchaser of this gold should be always satisfied by actual chemical test that it is genuine, as the imitation which has lately been brought into the market cannot be detected in any other way. It has, however, no gold whatever about it, and tarnishes even with the heat of the hand during use. Where pure Japanese gold thread can be obtained, it is to be hoped that no embroideress will use imitation golds. However they may be lacquered—and the worker may be led to believe that they are so protected—they are rubbish, cheap and worthless, and it is absurd to waste labor on them.

Some of the stitches to be described in the next chapter can only be executed in passing, as the gold thread itself must be drawn through the material, of which the paper-covered gold thread will not admit. All the stitches already described, and many others, however, can be worked in Japanese or Chinese gold thread.

The beautiful gold work of the antique ecclesiastical embroideries—although some of it is seven hundred years old—is as bright as when it left the hands of the worker. It is, of course, all pure gold, some of it actual wire made of the precious metal and some manufactured into a close thread with silk. In either case it could be freely passed backward and forward through the ground, like any other thread.

There is no question whatever about the superiority of passing over paper gold. It is sold by the weight, and has this advantage, that however old and worn, old gold thread can always be sold at the current price of gold. The embroideress, therefore, who wishes her work to last and be beautiful forever, will use the pure gold passing, but for the beginner, as well as for those to whom the great expense of gold is a consideration, the modern gold thread of China and Japan will serve very satisfactorily.

L. HIGGIN.

NOTES AND HINTS.

To photograph silverware is somewhat difficult, owing to the white or frosted parts impressing the sensitive film before the burnished portions, which in silver, under certain conditions, are practically black. But if the burnished portions be dulled, much of the difficulty vanishes. One method of dulling the surface is by dabbing the burnished or excessively bright parts lightly but evenly with a piece of glazier's common putty. Afterward the putty is easily removed by brushing it over with clean, dry whiting or, better still, precipitated chalk. If the putty itself is made of precipitated chalk, all chance of scratching the surface of the silver will be avoided. A little of the chalk mixed with almost any kind of oil will answer.

ARTICLES which do not require much handling, may be gilt quickly without a battery as follows: One part of chloride of gold and four parts cyanide of potash are dissolved in boiling distilled water, and the gilding fluid is ready; the articles are hung into this hot solution, tied by a fine copper wire to a strip of zinc, scratched clean, and left in it for a few minutes.

To prevent silverware from tarnishing, paint it with a soft brush dipped in alcohol in which some collodion has been dissolved. The liquid dries immediately and forms a thin, transparent and absolutely invisible coating upon the silver, which completely protects it from all effects of the atmosphere. It can be removed at any time by dipping the article in hot water.

WORKERS in water-colors know well the delightful stage when their paper, after being damped, is only just not dry; when washes work freely and evenly, dry slowly, and allow a little time for thought. They know how short is the duration of this happy condition, especially in open-air sketching on a sunny day. Mr. Stephen Clift, with the "Balneograph," makes it last as long as the painter chooses. The apparatus consists simply of a japanned metal tray about half an inch deep, having the edges turned over about half an inch, so as to form a trough round three sides of the tray. A sheet of extra thick blotting paper is laid at the bottom of the tray and thoroughly wetted. The superfluous water is then poured off, and the paper on which the painting is to be done is then wetted and laid carefully upon the blotting paper so as to be in contact with it throughout. If now the tray is set on edge, and the water kept standing in the trough, the blotting paper will remain soaked, and keep the picture damp. All who like "working wet" will, no doubt, find the Balneograph a boon, and many amateurs may be saved from the anxious haste that often spoils a sky, for instance, from the fear of hard edges and patches. "We have found by experience," says The (London) Artist, "that the paper is kept in capital condition, not too damp, but just damp enough, and we heartily commend the apparatus to the notice of water-colorists."

Correspondence.

PAINTING "HILDA" IN MINERAL COLORS.

MRS. J. A. W., Tacoma, W. T.—To paint in mineral colors Miss Rosina Emmett's design, "Hilda," published in The Art Amateur for last January, make the sky blue, deeper overhead and growing lighter and warmer toward the horizon. The doves, which are white and gray, flutter in front of the window arch of gray stone. The girl, "Hilda," who is tending the lamp while feeding the doves (as recorded in Hawthorne's "Marble Faun"), wears a dress of pale yellow, very gray in quality. The walls are of gray stone, and a deep red vase, holding a white lily, stands under the brass lamp and white marble Virgin. In painting the sky use sky blue. The dress is washed in with mixing yellow and shaded with a very little gray. For the walls use dark brown. Paint the vase with deep red brown, shaded with iron violet. In painting the white lilies leave out the lights, and shade with a gray made from ivory black and sky blue, adding a little ivory yellow in the warmer parts. To paint the hair, which is dark reddish brown, use sepia. The complexion is laid in with ivory yellow and flesh red No. 2, using a double quantity of yellow and blending the tones in finishing. To paint the brass lamp use jonquil yellow shaded with brown green. The doves are painted, some with dark brown in different shades, leaving out the lights, and others with ivory black and sky blue.

AN AUTUMN LANDSCAPE.

Y. Z., New York.—The charcoal-drawing by Allongé may be done in oil or pastel according to the following scheme of color, which will be equally suited to both. The scene represents the woods in early autumn. The background is light hazy gray green, with some warm touches suggesting the changing season. A little bit of blue sky is seen over the tops of the distant trees and breaks through the branches higher up. In the middle distance, the foliage is a warmer green with brighter red and yellow touches. The bare, straight tree trunks are relieved against the gray background, and, though much darker in value, are yet quite gray also. The large dead tree in the foreground stands out strong and dark against the sky and distant landscape. Make this tree rich and warm in the shadows, but rather gray than brown in the lights. In the immediate foreground the bushes are hung with yellow and brown leaves, while the short grass is a very warm green and some of it is dried up and yellow. Make the path reddish yellow in the foreground, becoming grayer and cooler in tone as it recedes into the distance. To paint this in oil colors, use for the sky, cobalt, white, a little light cadmium, a little madder lake and a little ivory black. Make the blue lighter and warmer in quality where it meets the tops of the trees, letting the darkest blue be overhead. For the distant gray green trees, use cobalt, white, light red, ivory black and a little yellow ochre. In the cooler touches substitute madder lake for light red. In the greens of the middle distance, use cadmium in place of yellow ochre and add raw umber in the shadows. For the foreground grass use Antwerp blue, white, light cadmium, vermilion, and ivory black. In the shadows use burnt sienna, light cadmium, white, Antwerp blue, ivory black and raw umber. Paint the tree trunks of the middle distance with ivory black, permanent blue, or cobalt, white, madder lake, raw umber, and light red. The large tree in the foreground is painted with raw umber, white, ivory black, burnt sienna, and a little permanent blue. The yellow grass with yellow ochre, raw umber, burnt sienna, white, and ivory black. For the road, use light red, yellow ochre, white, raw umber and ivory black.

As to giving the equivalent colors in pastel, we would say that the whole system of pastel is so different from oil painting that it is impossible to do what you ask. The pastels come in every conceivable shade of color and are not made by mixing two or three together as in oil. For instance, instead of mixing blue, yellow, white, red, and black, to make a certain tone of green, you select from your box exactly the shade you want and rub it on the paper. The colors may be qualified somewhat by rubbing others over them, if too light or too dark.

PAINTING TULIPS IN MINERAL COLORS.

EDNA, Lynn, Mass.—The treatment in mineral colors of the tulip design published last June (Plate 442) is as follows: For the partly hidden flower at the top use jonquil yellow, putting on two coats of this color on the inside of the petals and but one on the outside. Brush on this color in broad touches, so as to give deep tones on the edges of the petals, leaving the paler color in the high lights. Shade the flower with brown green, used delicately on the inside of the flower and in stronger color on the outside. The flower on the top may be painted in orange yellow in the same manner as the first one. The cluster of petals should have the same coloring and deeper shading of brown green, mixing with it a little ivory black. On the outside of the petals touches of orange red may be placed, as indicated by the shading in the design, if desired. The color will need to be used in its full strength if put over the yellow, and to insure a deep tint erase the yellow from the china before putting on the red. Shade over both yellow and red with the brown green. The other three flowers may be painted in reds, using orange red for one and deep red brown for the other two. In painting with orange red use the color in medium strength for the first wash, and in putting on the second let the color be deepest at the base and the edges of the petals. Shade with brown green. A little brown No. 17 may be added to deep red brown for a few dark touches. Around the stamens leave a patch of yellow, which may be shaded with brown green, and with brown green and a little black added where gray tints are desired. When using deep red brown put on a medium wash, then add the color stronger for the broad touches of the second coat. For the high lights erase color from the china, and put on a broad touch of pale color, made by mixing a very little deep blue with deep purple. For the stems mix deep blue with grass green, adding a very little black. The color should be somewhat pale and of a greenish gray. Use the same color for the leaves, adding a little deep purple to brown green for shadows on leaves in perspective, and using brown green alone for shading grasses, stems and other leaves. Mix deep purple with ivory black for the stamens. Outline with deep purple and brown No. 17, mixed in equal proportions.

FLESH TINTS IN PHOTOGRAPH COLORING.

J. B., Cincinnati. (1) Avoid the aniline colors sold in bottles, which are harsh and fugitive. Go to some responsible local dealer in artists' materials, like Emery H. Barton, opposite the Arcade, and ask for the best water-colors, either moist, in little pans, or in cakes. (2) Supposing that you are using the latter, for the first flesh-wash put two drops of water on the palette, and rub down raw Sienna, close to it the same quantity of Naples yellow, and a third patch of pink madder, but about as much again of this as of the other two if for a tolerably fair skin, and the fairer the complexion the more pink madder; should the complexion be very dark, add a little Vandyck brown. With the brush mix all these together. A little practice will enable you to

judge whether there is the proper amount of each color to produce the tint wanted. This wash must be put on thin and lightly, using the larger brush well filled, beginning at the parting of the hair, and continuing over the face and neck; no care need be taken that it should not go over the background, collar, and dress, as after the second flesh-wash is also applied, and both are quite dry, all that is superfluous can be removed; also wash the hands and any part of the flesh shown in the same way. Unless passed over the portrait quickly the wash will look blotchy or streaky. Let this become thoroughly dry before using the second flesh-wash, which is pink madder alone, very thin, and put on with extreme lightness, so as not to disturb the color beneath, or it would give a scarred look.

EMBROIDERY HINTS.

ARACHNE, Troy, N. Y.—(1) Arrasene is a species of worsted chenille, but is not twisted round fine wire or silk, like ordinary chenille; though it is woven first into a fabric, and then cut in the same manner. It serves to produce broad effects for screen panels, or borders, and has a very soft, rich appearance when carefully used. It is made also in silk; but this is inferior to worsted arrasene, or the old-fashioned chenille. (2) You might take your color scheme from the following description of a piece of silk embroidery in which it was charmingly carried out: The ground was bronze green satin; upon it were worked sprays of convolvulus springing from a vase of gray satin; the convolvulus flowers were white, edged with a pure blue—not the purplish blue of the natural flower, for that would not have harmonized so well—and yet there was nothing unnatural in the effect of the color. The leaves were of yellow and gray greens, and the stalks a brownish green. Then, to give warmth and life, some sulphur butterflies hovered over the garlands. Thus, though in the coloring of the design the component parts only of the bronze green ground were used, the effect was perfect. This piece of work was for the front of an upright piano, and its quiet cheerfulness replaced with admirable effect the usual unmeaning fretwork lined with silk of some raw color.

B. S. T., Brooklyn, N. Y.—The transfer of old embroideries on to a new ground is usually done by appliqué. In transferring old needlework, it is necessary to cut away the ground close to the edge of the embroidery. It is then placed on the new material, which has been previously framed and the outline tacked down. The best way of finishing is then to work in the edges with silks dyed exactly to match the colors in the old work. If properly done it is impossible to discover which are old and which new stitches, and, except by examining the back, that the work has been transferred at all. Embroidery transferred in this manner is as good as it was in its first days, and, in many cases is much better, for time often has the same mellowing and beautifying effect upon embroideries as upon paintings.

"THE FIGHTING GLADIATOR."

A. F., Elizabeth, N. J.—The "Fighting Gladiator" is not a gladiator at all. The heroic nudity of the figure shows it to have been a work of ideal character, probably dedicated to a legendary celebrity. Thiersch thinks it may be Achilles contending with Penthesilea the Amazon. Differing from other antiques, which are complete in themselves, this figure needs many accessories to explain its action. We must imagine an opponent on horseback, to which the intense upward gaze of the hero is directed; and fancy must supply too, the sword in the right hand, and the shield, of which only the strap remains around the left arm. This splendid piece of work is signed "Agasias, son of Dositheus the Ephesian," and it is probable that it is not the copy of any other masterpiece, but an original conception. It is the only antique athlete represented in what moderns would grant to be "fighting condition." Its lean, sinewy tension is admirably expressive. The period of its sculpture may probably have been about 400 B. C. It was found buried in the sea-coast sands at Antium, near the palace of the Roman emperors, on the spot where, a century earlier, the Apollo Belvidere was found. A whole family of Ephesian artists seems to be indicated in the name of Agasias, so common on antiques—a family finally extinct, perhaps, in Roman subjugation, with that Agasias of Delos who lived a hundred years before our era. The "Fighting Gladiator" became the property of the Borghese family. Napoleon bought in 1808 the collection of antiquities in the Borghese villa, 255 in number. The "Gladiator" is now in the Louvre.

"ENDOLITHIC"

BRAMPTON, Montreal.—"Endolithic" is an invention of Dr. Hand Smith, an Englishman. It has not been introduced into this country, and we cannot speak of it from personal knowledge. Cassell's Family Magazine, in mentioning "Endolithic" as furnishing a ready mode of duplicating pictures for house decoration, says: "Suppose, for instance, that you resolve to have two panels of marble let into the sides of your mantel-piece; you will paint the design on the surface of the marble, send it to undergo the 'driving-in process,' with instructions that a cross-section is to be cut off, and, without farther trouble, you have your painting and the duplicate. And this slicing off can be repeated, the picture remaining indestructible as far as the color has been allowed to sink in. . . . If a tube of color is turned upside down on a block of marble, and left so for a sufficient length of time, the color will penetrate straight through the whole depth; after that no more color will leave the tube, for it will not spread outward beneath the surface."

A MEDIUM FOR FLORENTINE COLORS.

SIR: Is there any sizing which will work well if mixed with the Florentine fresco colors manufactured by Devos & Co.? Some of the colors flake off if used alone. I have tried gum arabic, but it makes the paint look streaked when dry.

M. T. O., Williamsport, Pa.

A thin solution of gum arabic water or white glue size will answer the purpose. The gum arabic used was probably too thick, which caused it to be streaked.

"PRIMING" IN SCENE PAINTING.

T. S. T., Boston.—(1) Before the operation of "priming" your canvas should have received a coating of size. Use the best double size, melting it in a kettle with a little water; watch it and stir it occasionally, but do not let it boil. Brush it well into the canvas. When it is dry, apply the priming with a broad whitewash-brush. This is whitening soaked in water until it looks like thick white mud, to which is added strong size until the consistency of the mixture is that of cream. (2) Unless the canvas is very rough in texture, one priming will be sufficient.

WATER-COLORS FOR CHINA PAINTING.

H. T., New York.—The following directions for using Hancock & Sons' Worcester moist water-colors for painting on china—they may also be used on paper, silk or velvet—are furnished by the manufacturers themselves: Take out of the pans or tubes the colors required and place upon the palette, mixing with them